



ASSEMBLYMEMBER
NICOLE PARRA
Representing the 30th Assembly District



Parra Notes

January 15, 2008

Hello Friends,

I hope this first edition of the 2008 Parra Notes finds you in good health and good spirits. **Happy New Year** to each and everyone one.

After a Holiday Season filled with the warmth of family and friends, the **California State Legislature reconvened on January 7, 2008** to the reality of what may be the biggest obstacle we will have to overcome in my five years as an Assemblymember – an approximately **\$14 billion budget deficit**. While the budget lurks at the forefront of everyone's mind, the State Legislature continues to move forward with policy committees to hear the myriad bills put forth by lawmakers.

On January 8, Governor Schwarzenegger held his annual State of the State. In his speech, the Governor challenged California to continue making progress on important issues like health care, while taking this opportunity to make bold changes to our budget process and structural deficiencies. I agree with the Governor and hold out hope that as we delve into solving our budget woes, we also remain committed to finding solutions to our water, infrastructure, and economic development needs. www.gov.ca.gov/index.php?/press-release/8444

In addition, the **Governor declared a fiscal emergency and called a Special Session in accordance with Proposition 58** to address a projected current year budget shortfall of \$3.3 billion and a projected budget year operating deficit of \$11.2 billion, which together total a \$14.5 billion shortfall. Combined, the Governor's Special Session and Budget proposals provide \$17.3 billion in General Fund solutions that close the projected \$14.5 billion shortfall and result in a final reserve of \$2.8 billion.

The General Fund solutions include additional borrowing and skipping debt payments (\$4.8 billion), accounting changes (\$2 billion), roughly **10 percent across the board cuts** (\$9.3 billion), and other various solutions (\$1.5 billion). With the Special Session proposals now before the Legislature, the Legislature has 45 days to act to address the fiscal emergency. The Assembly Budget Committee and Subcommittees will begin holding hearings to gain an understanding of the Governor's proposals, explore alternative budget solutions, and to develop legislation to address the fiscal emergency. www.eBudget.ca.gov.

Stay tuned! This all makes 2008 an interesting year to watch. I will continue to keep you posted on measures to address to our State budget crisis as we proceed.

What's Happening in Sacramento

I enjoyed the opportunity to sit down and personally discuss a number of issues, including our State's budget crisis, fiscal accountability, and the outlook for this year's tax season with **State Controller John Chiang**. The Controller has taken a number of progressive steps since taking office, including helping constituents find unclaimed property. www.sco.ca.gov

Given the number of natural crisis that have hit the **30th Assembly District** and the State of California – from storms, to high winds, to fires, to flooding – I welcomed the chance to discuss these issues and others with **Kathleen Webb, the Governor's Insurance Advisor**. Recently, **Kings County declared a state of emergency** due to the damage wrought by high winds.

My Legislative Highlights

With the Legislature back in Session, a number of my bills have already passed hurdles in key Assembly committees. My landmark legislation, **AB 27**, has moved an important step forward after I presented the bill at a hearing of the Assembly Jobs, Economic Development, and the Economy Committee. The **bill passed by a unanimous vote** and now heads to the Assembly Appropriations Committee. AB 27 maintains the **California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley's** primary focus and work and would place the Partnership in statute until January 1, 2020 to allow it to carry out its Strategic Action Proposal. Current executive order continues the Partnership only through December 31, 2008. Thank you to Jeff Rowe of the Alliance Worknet in Modesto, and Dr. Hazel Hill of Delta College in Stockton, for traveling to Sacramento to testify on behalf of AB 27.

AB 1110 passed out of the Assembly Public Safety Committee. I introduced AB 1110 to establish minimum, but comprehensive, standards for each ward's involvement with the California Youth Authority (CYA) – from commitment through parole. These standards will help to insure that wards committed to the department are provided with appropriate services to give them a far better chance to succeed upon release from the CYA.

I was honored to be named one of Business Street's "40 Under 40." Business Street is an online publication serving the business communities in **Fresno, Kings, Madera, and Tulare counties**. The selection recognizes the top business professionals in the private and public sectors in central California who are leaders in the community, and have experienced great success before the age of 40. I am fortunate to be named, along with many other fine leaders, as the future of the Central Valley. www.businessstreetonline.com

Constituents Visit Sacramento

Congratulations to the City of Wasco on being awarded funding for The Roses of Barcelona. The funds are from the California Department of Housing and Community Development's "Building Equity and Growth in Neighborhoods" (BEGIN) program designed to help meet the **housing needs of California's low and moderate income families.**

The California Department of Housing and Community Development has awarded a grant from the Serna Program to the **Maranatha Corporation.** These funds will be used for **the acquisition of 30 newly constructed homes to be owned and occupied by agricultural households in the City of Wasco.**

The cities of Lemoore and McFarland also received grants from the California Department of Housing and Community Development. These fine cities were awarded grants through the Community Development Block Grant program to help lay the groundwork for affordable housing and economic development activities.

Kings County Area Public Transit Agency has been awarded a service implementation grant from the California Department of Transportation under the Agricultural Worker Transportation Program (AWTP). The intent of the AWTP is to provide safe, efficient, reliable, and affordable transportation services to agricultural workers commuting to and from worksites in rural areas.

In the District

I spent quality time in **Fresno County.** Meeting with the **Central Valley Business Incubator,** I learned about some of the wonderful things they are doing to improve the economic development and quality of life in the community through fostering entrepreneurs and sustainable development solutions. I urge you to visit their website at www.cvbi.org to find out the exciting things they are involved in and their offerings of seminars and workshops.

I visited with the **Fresno County Farm Bureau** to provide a legislative update and share thoughts on hot topics for the upcoming legislative year. Health care, the state budget and the need for an adequate water supply were major discussion areas. The meeting was well attended by Farm Bureau board members and demonstrated the Farm Bureau's continued outreach to elected officials about their needs and concerns.

I enjoyed the opportunity to speak at the **First Annual San Joaquin Valley Regional Conference held in Bakersfield.** I was able to share my legislative priority – **AB 27** – which aims to put the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley in statute. This event provided attendees with information on the planned growth for the region and contracting opportunities for small business. The event went a long way towards the goal of getting small business owners and prime contractors ready, able and qualified to do public sector work. www.minoritynews.info/summit

Meeting Requests

If you or your organization would like to set up a time to meet with me or would like for me to attend an event you are sponsoring, please feel free to contact my **Executive Secretary Rozanne Jones** at (916) 319-2030 or by e-mail at Rozanne.Jones@asm.ca.gov

Internships

I am accepting applications for the internship program in my **Hanford, Bakersfield** and **Sacramento** offices. Candidates should be residents of the **30th Assembly District**, possess solid research and communication skills, and have a strong interest in public policy and political issues facing the **Central Valley**. Applications can be found by going to: <http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a30>.

For Hanford office internships contact **Richard Valle** at (559) 585-7170 or by e-mail at: Richard.Valle@asm.ca.gov

For Bakersfield office internships contact **Nerissa Robinson** at (661) 334-3745 or by e-mail at: Nerissa.Robinson@asm.ca.gov

For Sacramento office internships contact **Derek Chernow** at (916) 319-2030 or by e-mail at: Derek.Chernow@asm.ca.gov

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